

How (and when) to download Mac OS X Software Updates

Presentation for Intermediate Macintosh Users

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Software Updates

— [Periodically, Apple releases updates to Mac OS X and other Apple application to correct bugs or security holes, or to introduce new features.

— [Apple includes a Software Update utility as part of Mac OS X which locates and downloads updates to Apple software.

— [By default, Software Update checks for updates once a week and will inform you if updates are available.

Permission to install

— [As a security measure, Software Update will always ask you for permission before installing software update.

— [To give it permission, you must type in your administrative password (if you are using an administrative account).

— [If you are not using an administrative account, you must type in the name of an administrative account and that account password.

Before you download updates

— [Do a backup of important files to another hard drive.

— [Find and open Disk Utility (in Applications > Utilities).

— [In Disk Utility, run Repair Permissions by clicking on the hard drive icon with Mac OS X running, then click on the Repair Permissions button.

— [You can also use a third-party disk repair utility (like DiskWarrior) to repair any problems before updating.

Moved any Application icons?

— [If you moved any Apple application icons from the Applications folder, you **MUST** move them back into Applications before downloading any updates.

— [The Software Update utility expects those icons to be in Applications, and the update will be performed incorrectly or not at all if they were moved.

— [Make an alias for the application instead of moving it.

— [Of course, if you don't want the update (iMovie '06), then ignore the advice given above.

Wait and check MacFixit.com

— [Just because Apple announces a new software update and recommends you download and install it immediately, doesn't mean you should.

— [Wait a day or two before downloading that update, and do some research to find out how others have experienced the results of that software update.

— [Of the many Macintosh-related websites, MacFixit.com is still one of the best ways to find reactions to an update.

Shared Experience

— [MacFixit, Macintouch.com and other websites post reports on their own tests and experiences of others, and will report whether an update works and if it causes other problems.

— [For example, several MacBook and Macbook Pro users have reported to MacFixit problems with running from their batteries after downloading firmware updates recently released by Apple.

— [MacFixit will also post available solutions or workarounds.

The Process Illustrated

If you allow Software Update to check for updates periodically, you will see this message when one is available:



Turning off auto updates

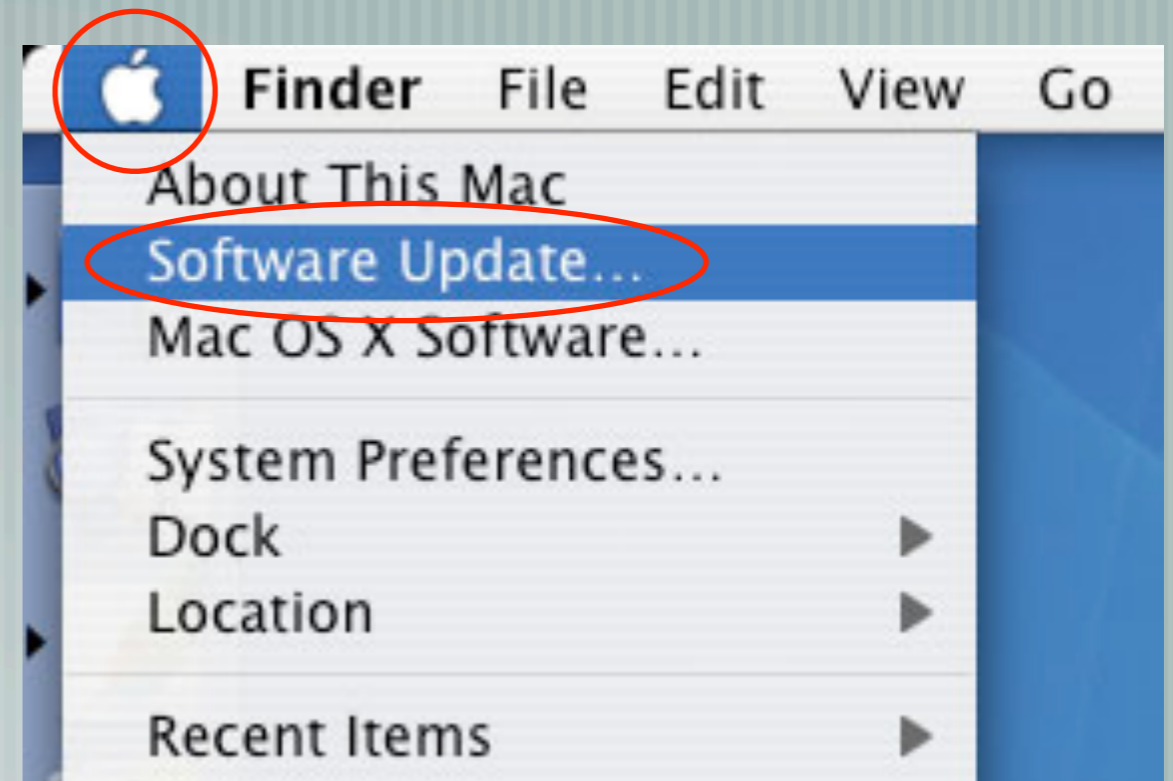
If you don't want Software Update to automatically check for updates, you can turn it off in Software Update preferences.



Open System Preferences and click on the Software Update icon to open the Software Update preference pane. Then uncheck the Check for Updates checkbox.

Starting the process

If you don't have Software Update set to automatically check for updates, you can do it manually by choosing Software Update from the Blue Apple menu on the left side of the menubar.



Choosing updates to download

You can choose which updates to download by clicking off the checkmark in the checkbox next to an update.



Hiding unwanted updates

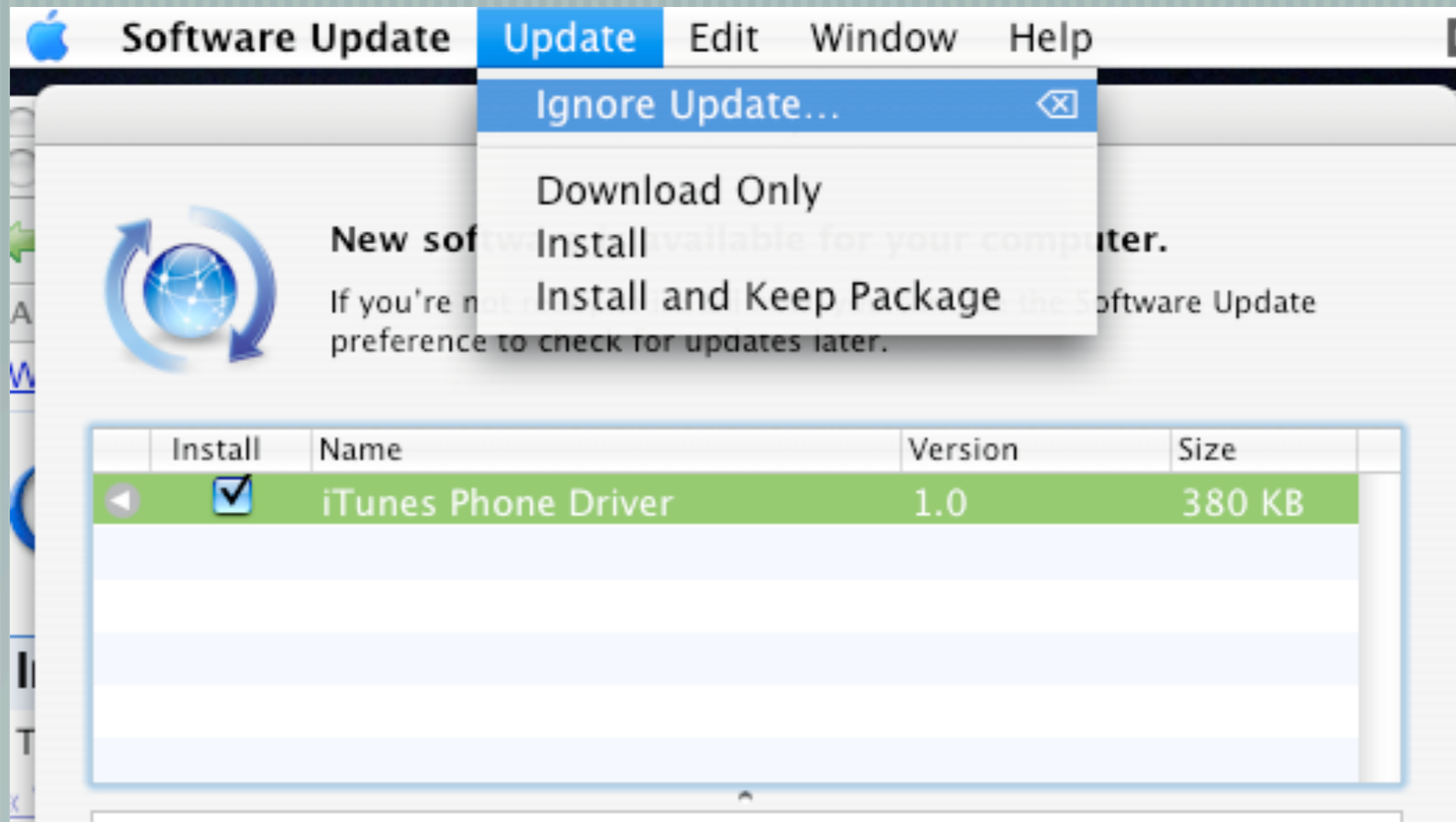
— [You also can hide certain updates so that Software Update stops informing you they are available.

— [To do this, select the unwanted update, then go to the Update menu item in the menu bar and select “Ignore Update.”

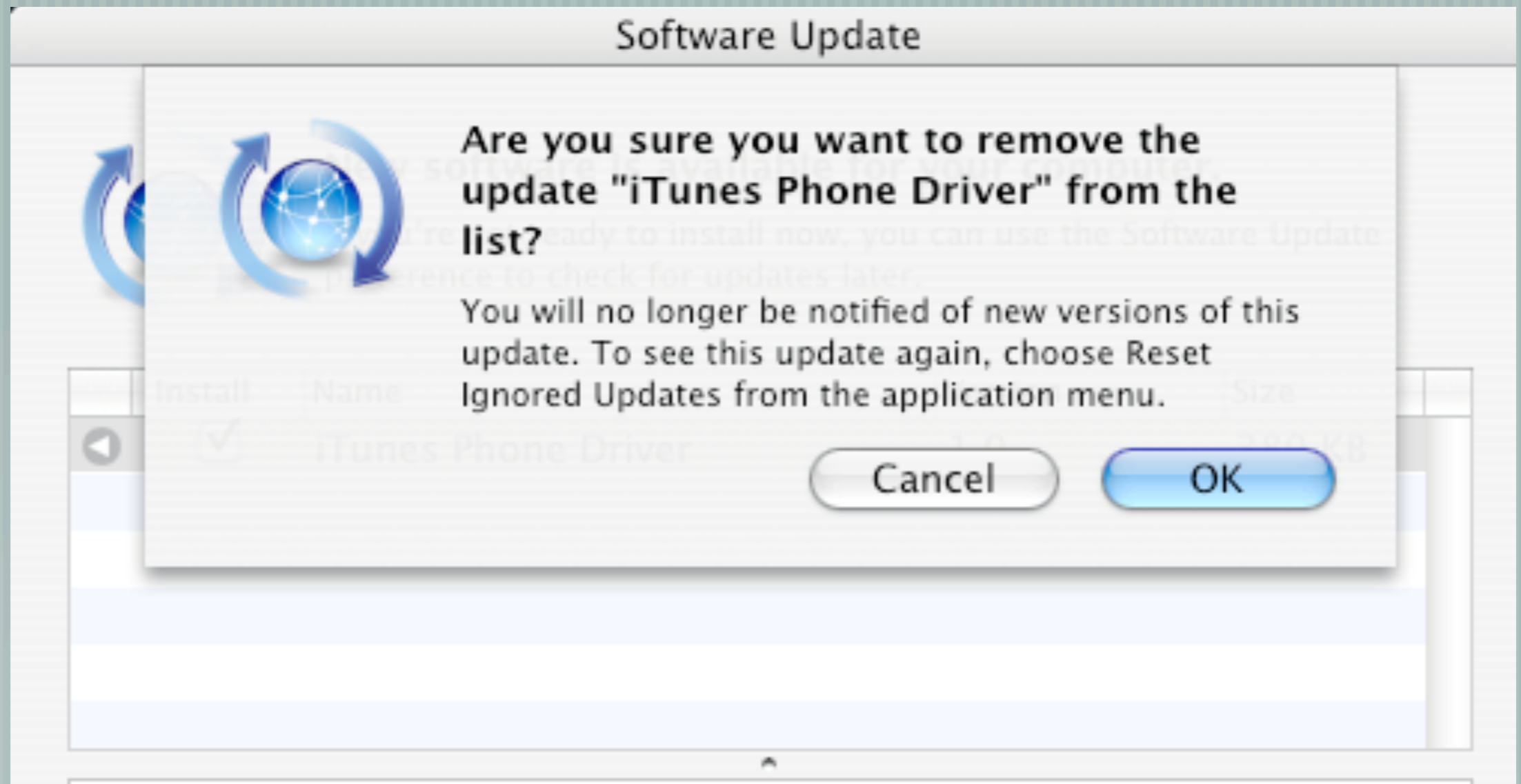
— [A dialog box will confirm you want to do this. Click OK, and you will not be asked about that item again.

— [You can always choose later to reveal ignored updates.

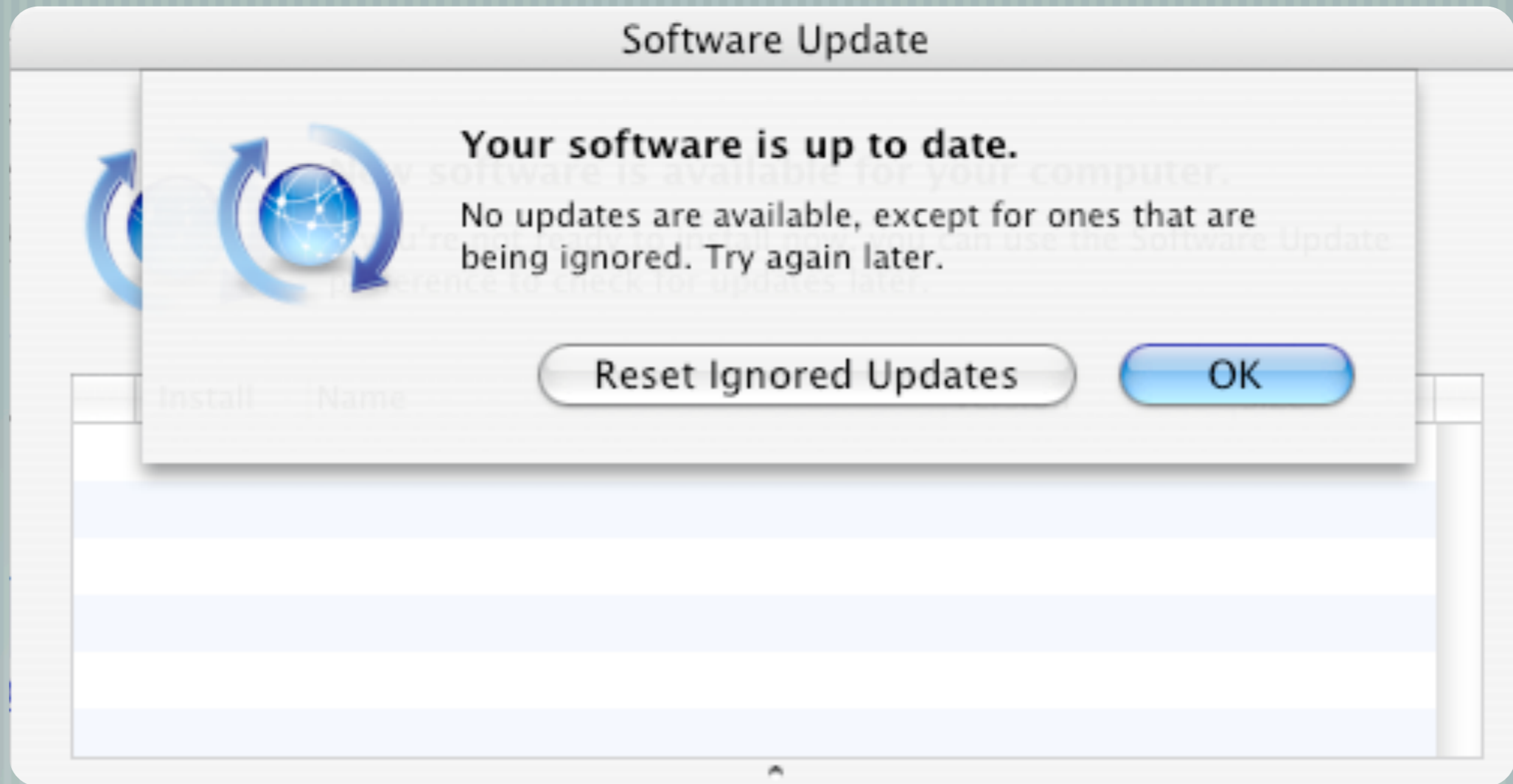
Choosing to ignore an update



Confirming ignoring an update



If no updates available...



Downloading updates



— [You don't need Software Update to download Apple software updates.

— [You can go to Apple's Software Update section of its Support website to find a list of relatively recent releases of all software updates.

— [<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/>

— [Click on the file size icon to start the download. The larger the file size in megabytes, the longer the download time.

Mac OS X updates

| | | |
|---|------------|---|
| Mac OS X 10.4.10 Update (PPC) This update includes general operating system fixes, as well as specific fixes or compatibility updates. | 06/20/2007 |  25MB |
| Mac OS X 10.4.10 Combo Update (PPC) This update includes general operating system fixes, as well as specific fixes or compatibility updates. | 06/20/2007 |  165MB |

Many Mac users have experienced problems downloading updates through Software Updates, because incremental updates (10.4.5 to 10.4.6, for example) contain some bugs.

You can get around this by going to the Downloads page and finding and downloading the Mac OS X Combination updater, rather than the incremental updater.

Caveats for direct download

— [If you follow the advice in the previous slide, please note the difference in download sizes between the incremental updater and the combo updater (combos are **MUCH LARGER**).

— [**VERY IMPORTANT:** With the advent of Intel-based Macs, note that OS updaters come in two flavors: PPC (the classic) and Intel (the newbie). One will not work on the other.

— [Also, older Macs may also require firmware updates which must be **MANUALLY INSTALLED** before other updates.

After the download...

— [Often, especially with OS and security updates, you must restart your Mac once the download is complete.

— [Reopen Software Update to check if there are any more updates; if so, you can download and install them.

— [After updates are complete, make sure your software and peripherals still work as expected, especially printers and other USB and FireWire peripherals.

— [Reopen Disk Utility and repair permissions again.

If you have problems...

— [DON'T PANIC (YET)! Instead, run Disk Utility again.

— [Next, start up in Safe Mode by restarting the Mac and holding down the Shift Key until you see the words "Safe Mode". This will flush out any corrupted cache files after the updates are installed. Once you see Safe Mode, then restart normally.

— [Finally, try zapping the PRAM/NVRAM by restarting and IMMEDIATELY holding down four keys – Apple-Option-P-R – and keep holding them down until you hear the startup chime three times. Then let go and let it start up.

If you still have problems...

- [If your Mac is less than a year old or you have AppleCare, call the AppleCare technical support phone number: (800) 275-2273. Have your AppleCare agreement number or your Mac's serial number handy.
- [If your Mac is out of warranty or you don't have AppleCare, you can call Apple, take to see an Apple Genius at the local Apple store, or contact your favorite experienced local Macintosh technical support professional. Be prepared to spend some money, no matter where you go.

The End

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